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CONTENTS

Coastal Living December 2015 / January 2016



40

Deck the Shore!

Get ready to decorate with festive, splashy Christmas tree looks inspired by the beauty of the coast.

46

Sandy & Bright

The holidays sparkle in a whole new light at this airy Manhattan Beach, California, house.

54

Christmas on the Bay

D.C. chef Robert Wiedmaier's historic home on the Chesapeake Bay hums with family and a tasty feast.

PLUS: FLIP THE ISSUE FOR A SPECIAL 2016 TRAVEL SECTION

Currents

5 What's on Our Radar

The latest in style, travel, books, beauty, and more

Gift Guide

15 Find the ideal presents for all the shore-loving people on your list.

Havens

27 2015 Idea Cottage

We're celebrating an icon-the classic beach bungalow-with our first-ever renovation showhouse in sunny Seagrove, Florida!

Kitchen

- 61 Gather Cookies and cocktails: the best new holiday party
- 67 Hooked This mussel stew is now your favorite dish to serve a crowd.

IN EVERY ISSUE

Editor's Letter 2 coastalliving.com 72 Sources 72 Coastal View 74

ON THE COVER

Pink flamingos, retro ornaments, and much more star, from tree to shining tree, in our holiday decorating guide on page 40.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MAX KIM-BEE



IT MAY SURPRISE YOU to hear this, but I love winter. The cold weather and shorter days force me to slow down, to not over-commit (as I sometimes do during the other three seasons). Which is why, when it comes to the holidays, I tend to check my usual pack-up-and-go mentality at the door—it's like I was meant to be a homebody, feathering my nest with tinsel and twinkle while mulled wine simmers on the stove and cookies bake in the oven, for just four weeks of the year.

Even as a child, I remember being a little mystified by the idea of vacationing for the holidays. Our neighbors escaped to Mexico, and always came back with a tan and gifts (answering any questions about whether or not Santa Claus would find them south of the border). We also had family friends who left town for a warm-weather cruise every year on

Christmas Day. As exciting as that sounded, I wondered why they didn't do as we did-spend the season at home to visit with family, play with new toys, or even just sit around doing not much at all.

Then one year, my parents took us to Ponte Vedra, Florida, for New Year's. Falling asleep to the sound of waves pounding the shore (in the dead of winter, no less) introduced me to the restorative power of celebrating the holidays at home with friends and family and making a fresh start to the new year on the coast.

In that spirit, we've decided to devote our December/January issue to the best of both worlds: First, a seaside holiday extravaganza complete with gift ideas, party menus, and decorating inspiration. On the flip side, we've packed our "Offthe-Grid-Getaways" travel special with relaxing, rejuvenating coastal vacations that truly allow you to unplug. Each section gets its own cover-so when the holidays have come and gone and your wanderlust begins to return, all you have to do is turn over your issue for an instant sunny escape.

Wherever you spend the season, I wish you the happiest of holidays. As for my family, we'll be hunkered down at home. That is until the first of the year, when you'll find me somewhere along the coast, with my toes in the sand and my eyes on the horizon, ready to ring in 2016.

STEELE THOMAS MARCOUX, EDITOR steele@coastalliving.com; @steelemarcoux

2015 WINNER

COCKTAIL OF THE MONTH FLAMINGO FIZZ

Gina Klotz, Englewood, Florida

Gina was the first to suggest this effervescent name for our pomegranate-gin sip: "It's a perfect name because the drink is lightly fizzed with seltzer and is a beautiful shade of pink found on exotic flamingos," she says. Find more chances to win at coastalliving.com/namethisdrink

VIEWFINDER

CL staffers share where they're goingand why—in 2016



Portland, Maine

"I'm a sucker for salty New England towns. I'd love to dig into the architecture, and I hear the food scene is to die for." -Homes Editor Ellen McGaulev



Algarve, Portugal

"The culture, food, and landscape having been tugging at me to get there and explore." -Associate Editor Marisa Spyker



St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands "Sixty percent of the island is a white sand-lined

national park that's lush and pristine." -Style Director Lindsey Ellis Beatty

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CURRENTS

What's On Owr Radar This Month

COOL FINDS

RAISE THE BAR

Host and toast with our top barware picks in three beachy themes (including booze to match!).

Starting the season: the universal sign of welcome

FUNTASTIC!

ON PRODUCED BY RACHAEL

STEPHEN DEVRIES;

Mix a drink, then serve it up in the same vintageinspired container. You can twist the top half off, or leave it on with its straw. Brilliant.

The Pineapple Co by W&P Design Large Pineapple Tumbler with Straw, \$99, Pineapple Tumbler, \$29, and Pineapple Shot Glass Set, \$29, all in Gold; thepineapple.co. For more information—and great coastal bar ideas!—turn to page 6.

December 2015 / January 2016 COASTAL LIVING 5

































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A SWELL HOLIDAY

At the jolliest of surfing celebrations, wave riders ditch wet suits for Santa suits

WHERE CAN YOU FIND Kris Kringle Christmas Eve morning? Instead of hanging ornaments at the North Pole, he's hanging ten in the Cocoa Beach, Florida, surf. At least that's what more than 300 red coat- and beard-clad surfers will do as they descend on the Florida shore for the 7th annual Surfing Santas festival.

What started as family fun for Florida resident George Trosset has turned into a citywide extravaganza. "The first year we did it, I called my son the day before and asked him to dress up as an elf and come out and surf with me on Christmas Eve," recalls Trosset. "To my surprise, he actually did." Six years later, the free event draws more than 4,000 spectators and hundreds of costumed surfers, dozens of whom will parachute onto the sandy beaches (because the reindeer are at home resting up, of course).

The event, sponsored by the city of Cocoa Beach, the Tourist Development Council, and Ron Jon's Surf Shop, raises money for charities through merchandise sales. Proceeds go to Florida Surf Museum; Grind for Life, which provides financial assistance to cancer patients and their families traveling long distances for treatment; and Life is Good Kids Foundation, which helps underprivileged children around the country. For event goods, videos of the surf party, donation information, and more, check out surfingsantas.org.

HOT DATES Seaside **Traditions**

cheer-filled fests by the shore

11/21-1/31

Nights of Lights

ST. AUGUSTINE, FLORIDA

More than 3 million bulbs brighten the entire 450-yearold city of St. Augustine during Nights of Lights. Hundreds of thousands of visitors come to witness every building, tree, and even passing boat brightly and beautifully lit. floridashistoriccoast.com/nights

11/28-12/31

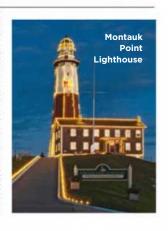
Montauk Point Lighthouse **Lighting Ceremony**

MONTAUK, NEW YORK

New York's oldest beacon glows all month long, but the official lighting ceremony-complete with holiday caroling—takes place the Saturday of Thanksgiving weekend. montauklighthouse.com

12/20 Jingle Bell Beach Run KONA, HAWAII

The family-friendly race in Kona, Hawaii, includes a holiday costume contest, plus a 200-yard dash for kids 6 and under, but the best part is the scenery along the stunning Alii Drive coastline. kona5k.com



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A Chat with **Beatriz Williams**

The historical seaside novels writer reflects on her latest. Along the Infinite Sea, from her coastal New England home

The book is set partially on Florida's east coast. What drew you there?

BW: There was a huge population boom happening in Florida in the '60s, and since part of the story involves a classic car, I thought "Where would an auction be happening at that time?" Palm Beach.

What do you think makes the coast a perpetually great setting for a story?

BW: There's something romantic about the way the ocean connects everybody in the world. It's our one eternal bond.

What period in time would you someday like to write about?

BW: I think it would be fun to do a novel set in the Edwardian era, that period right before World War I when everything was just grand-art, literature, the massive cruise liners that were sailing around the world.

What's a typical beach day like for you?

BW: It's funny; when I was younger, I felt like we always had to be doing something. Now that I have four kids, I'm content just sitting under an umbrella with a good book!

Favorite beach to visit?

BW: We recently vacationed in WaterColor, Florida, on the Gulf and loved everything about it: the people, the food, and especially the powdery white-sand beaches.



Fates and Furies (Riverhead Books)

BY LAUREN GROFF

To the outside world, Lotto and Mathilde's marriage is perfect, but their dueling perspectives reveal things are not always as they seem.

PETER GOLDEN

There is Light

(Atria Books)

BY PETER GOLDEN

Amid the turmoil of early 20th-century America, a Jewish immigrant embarks on a decadeslong affair with the granddaughter of a slave.







HOT TABLESCAPE

NEWLY MINTED

Instead of the usual Christmas green, opt for a mint-hued holiday paletteit's a refreshing twist on tradition that suits the freespirited ethos of the shore. A raffia runner adds natural texture, while scallopededge plates and a napkin with jaunty red stripes bring levity and fun. Simple sprigs of greenery adorn each place setting for an easy, festive element. Gold ribbon and flatware are the jewelry for your table, which is now in mint condition!

DINNERWARE

Herend CV12 Service Plate in Mint, \$175; graciousstyle.com

VIETRI Incanto Pearl Salad Plate, \$44: vietri.com

GLASSWARE

Terrain Two-Tone Tumbler in White, \$14 (small): shopterrain.com

Michael Wainwright USA Truro Gold Red Wine Stem, \$50; michael wainwright.com

LINENS

Serena & Lily Raffia Runner, \$68; serenaandlilv.com

VIETRI Red Stripe Napkin, \$16; vietri.com

ATTOCKED BY THE STREET

FLATWARE

West Elm Gold Flatware Set, \$39 for a five-piece setting; westelm.com

COOL OILS

About Face

Here's our favorite new way to quench dry, thirsty skin: A drop or two of these elixirs, which replenish the oils that your skin craves in winter (without leaving it greasy-just glorious).



HYDRATES DRY SKIN

RODIN olio lusso Face Oil. \$170: oliolusso.com



SMOOTHS LINES AND WRINKLES

Sunday Riley Modern Skincare Flora **Hydroactive Cellular** Face Oil, \$90; sephora.com



TIGHTENS PORES

Clarins Blue Orchid Face Treatment Oil. \$54; clarins.com



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Herbivore Botanicals Lapis Facial Oil. \$72: herbivore botanicals.com



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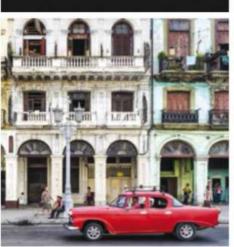


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HAPPY HOSTS page 16



BEACH BUMS page 18



SETTERS page 20



FREQUENT FLIERS

page 22



BY RACHAEL BURROW WILLUSTRATIONS BY MOIRA MILLMAN

GIFT GUIDE



Backgammon, dressed up for game night with a diamond print: Serena & Lily Signature Backgammon Set in Navy, \$198; serena andlily.com

> Made from antique chairs and brass that is fashioned in a Maryland shipyard: **Brothers Rich Crab Hammers**, \$88 each; brothersrich.com

A cocktail hour conversation piece in nickel-plated brass: **Authentic Models Lighthouse Cocktail Shaker,** \$270; 800/ 888-1992 for retailers

Hand-screened on

cotton, perfect for parties: **Thomaspaul Signal Flags Cocktail Napkins**, \$76 for a set of 12; shopthomas

paul.com



Happy Hosts

For the people who open their home to guests more weekends than not Harvested from waters in Maine and California: Farmhouse Pottery Coastal Farmed Sea Salt, \$18; farmhouse pottery.com

Jute rope plus stainless steel—an instant nautical addition to your table: **Shiraleah Noemi Candlestick Holders**, \$45-\$63 each; shiraleah.com

Crafted from linen that gets softer with time: **Brahms Mount Leo Stripe Linen Throw** in Dark Indigo, \$288; brahmsmount.com











REVIEWS FROM OUR GUESTS

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GIFT GUIDE

Painted in ink-or coffee!-by the artist before being printed digitally on cotton voile: Caryn Cramer Anuket Scarf in Inca, \$249; caryncramer.com

Crafted in the spirit of shoes worn on the Spanish coast: Soludos Smoking Slippers Embroidery in Pineapple, \$65; soludos.com



Reflecting the rocky West Coast landscape thanks to pieces of glass, jade, marble, and quartz: Irene Wood Shi Shi Necklace, \$140; historyandindustry.com





For the tastemakers, art lovers, and design-obsessed



Printed in Vancouver as a bold accent: Banquet Atelier & Workshop 19.69" by 27.56" Green Palm Leaf Art Print, \$60, in White Frame, \$200; banquet workshop.com







An American-made bamboo turntable and speakers: Ball and Buck Sota Moonbeam Turntable, from \$1,098, and Blumenstein Orca Speakers, \$898; ballandbuck.com





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CALGARY, Cushy Life, The Mattress & Sleep Company - EDMONTON, The Mattress & Sleep Company, McElheran's - HALIFAX, Attica - ISLAND VIEW (FREDERICTON), Valley Ridge Furniture - KITCHENER, Schreiter's - NEWMARKET, Goodnight & Sweet Dreamzzz - OTTAWA, Cadieux - TORONTO, Elte - VANCOUVER, Jordans Interiors - VICTORIA, Jordans Interiors - WINNIPEG, Brick's Fine Furniture

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THE BEST BEACH HOUSES often come in small packages. So for our first renovation showhouse, we wanted to celebrate one of the most classic—and compact—seaside dwellings: the beach cottage. Working with design duo Mark and Paige Schnell, along with builder Peter Horn of Artisan, Inc., we transformed a decades-old fixer-upper into a 2,500-square-foot retreat. It's tucked into the coastal town of Seagrove, Florida, "one of the oldest beachfront towns along 30A," says Horn, who grew up spending summers in the community, which is part of the 26-mile stretch of shore known as South Walton. "Locals have strived to maintain that historic character. We like the sandy, unpaved roads and the old oak trees that create a canopy over the homes." The designers kept the footprint of the cottage nearly the same, and built an addition onto the rear of the house to accommodate an airy great room. They also dreamed up a new "wine garden" in the back. (Check it out on page 34.) "One of the hallmarks of beach cottages is that the outdoors are just as important as the rooms inside," says Paige, an interior designer. (Mark, an urban designer, created the renovation's architectural design.) Here are 16 of our favorite ideas for updating a traditional beach cottage with smart, modern design.

1. STRENGTHEN SIDING The

team replaced the original worn wooden siding with composite cement boards designed to mimic the appearance of wood. "It lasts much longer than real wood and requires less maintenance," says Horn, adding that it looks similar to materials used in old Seagrove houses.

2. PLAY UP ORIGINAL

DETAILS Against the newly painted charcoal facade, the white geometric railings really pop. "The previous owner built them himself, modeled after railings he saw on a cottage in the Cayman Islands," says Mark. "They are unique to this house, and central to its character."



3. PROTECT THE PORCH

Mildew-resistant draperies tied with rope block rain an sun, and add priva

Horn insulated the ceilings on the veranda with rigid foam board. "It's a less protective type of insulation than what you would use indoors, but it's all you need to prevent the sun's heat from transferring through the porch roof," he says.

4. REPLACE WINDOWS WITH GLASS DOORS The deep

porch overhang limits sunlight in adjacent rooms, so the team replaced windows with impact-resistant glass-front French doors by Integrity. Now, additional light brightens the rooms and provides a seamless transition from indoors to outside. >

The porch base is painted Kendall Charcoal, the floor is painted Chelsea Gray, and the ceiling is painted Cloud Cover, all by Benjamin Moore. The furniture is by Lloyd Flanders, and the fabrics and throw are by Sunbrella. The windows and doors are by Integrity. The sunglasses are by Costa.

HAVENS (2015 IDEA COTTAGE)



The living room, dining room, and kitchen are painted White Dove, the kitchen cabinetry is painted Raccoon Fur, and the family room is painted Slate Teal in a high gloss, all by Benjamin Moore. The windows and doors are by Integrity. The lighting is by Circa Lighting. The seating is by Lee Industries. The living room fabrics, window treatments, rug, and throw are by Sunbrella.

5. BLEND OLD AND NEW To increase the small home's living and entertaining space without altering the original facade, the team added a 730-square-foot great room to the rear of the house, which accommodates a larger living and dining area, and an updated kitchen. Tongueand-groove walls and whitewashed oak floors create an appearance of age in keeping with the rest of the house, and vaulted ceilings with dormer windows ensure the space gets plenty of light. The furniture is upholstered in resilient allweather fabrics by Sunbrella that won't fade in the sun.





6. ADD WARMTH WITH WOOD To offset the modern surfaces of the kitchen-including Carrara marble countertops, a smoky-gray backsplash, and chrome Moen fixtures—Paige topped the island with rock maple butcher block for an organic contrast.

7. MAKE WALLS WORK HARDER Storage space in small cottage kitchens fills up fast, so Paige installed open shelving along an empty wall flanking an adjacent powder room. "Every inch of a house this size has to serve a purpose," she notes.





8 extstyle esharing meals and entertaining friends, the designers opted to keep the indoor dining area small, and tucked it into a corner of the great room. A 42-inch concrete table seats four; the seating is a mix of slipcovered armchairs and drum ottomans trimmed with a nailhead detail.

 ${f 9.}$ GO MONOCHROMATIC The designers embraced the compact size of the family room—previously the living room—by painting the walls, trim, and ceiling a glossy blue (Slate Teal by Benjamin Moore). White artwork and accessories and a polishednickel pendant from Circa Lighting brighten the marine hue.

HAVENS (2015 IDEA COTTAGE)



The guest room is painted Wood Lawn Blue, the master bath cabinetry is painted Black, and the office is painted Covington Blue and White Dove, all by Benjamin Moore. The doors are by Integrity. The master bath fixtures are by Moen. The lamps, sconces, and pendants are by Circa Lighting.

11. PLAY UP SMALL **SPACES WITH**

PATTERN Cane-print wallpaper punches up the master bath. "In small rooms, you have to do something big to make them memorable," says Paige, who paired the bold print with black cabinetry, marble countertops, and a chrome sconce by Circa Lighting.

10. HONOR THE PAST

Using a collection of different frames in a single neutral shade, Paige created a gallery wall of old family photos in the guest bedroom. "The main rule is to use a variety of sizes," says Paige. "I even like to mix and match styles, and do some with mats and some without." A pair of wall lamps strike a shiny modern contrast and make for stylish in-bed reading.







14. BUILD A WINE GARDEN Yes, really! The team transformed the unused backyard space into a prime hosting hangout. Ample sofa seating by Lloyd Flanders lines waist-height paneled walls that double as planters and align with the dimensions of the adjacent back porch. "It feels like an extension of the cottage," says Mark, who incorporated columns for stringing lights above the convivial garden. Granite-topped fire tables ensure the outdoor room is comfortable for family and friends year-round.

15. ADD A BEACHY CABANA A striped Sunbrella cabana serves as a beachy garden focal point and a shady spot to chill bottles and refill your glass. The wine bucket inside is a vintage urn, but the all-weather shelter can accommodate bar carts, shelving for outdoor games, or even a serving table for afternoon cookouts. For more information, see Sources, page 72. ➤

The fabrics and throw are by Sunbrella. The seating, end tables, and fire tables are by Lloyd Flanders.







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A talented trio took the cottage from humble abode to modern retreat. From left: architectural and urban designer Mark Schnell of Schnell Urban Design, interior designer Paige Schnell of Tracery Interiors, and builder Peter Horn of Artisan, Inc. in Costa sunglasses



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love the holidays here," says designer Jill Johnson of her sun-kissed and sand-dusted neighborhood in Manhattan Beach, California. "It's an easygoing place with plenty of celebrating, but lots of simple family time at the beach, too."

Johnson mirrors the community's happy holiday vibe in the shingle-clad home she designed, just blocks from the ocean, with natural abalone and boxwood wreaths decking the windows and reflective, mercury glass ornaments dotting festive garlands. "Around the holidays, I try to play off of the coastal surroundings and just enhance what's already here," says Johnson. "Natural greenery, sea-inspired colors, beachy ornaments-these all feel very right for this house."

That's because regardless of season, she balances artful details with laid-back, livable elements in the two-story home she shares with sons Charlie, 8, and Luke, 7. It's also a place where she lets her natural instincts be her guide. "The beauty of designing a home from scratch is that I didn't have to follow any rules. I just put in everything I love, and made it work," she says.

And the decorator and avid surfer knows a thing or two about following her passion. Thirteen years ago, Johnson traded in her career as a clothing designer—she had her own line of girls' surf wear-to segue into a new line of work. She now co-owns a $coastal\ design\ shop, Waterleaf\ Interiors, in\ the\ heart\ of\ downtown$







SEAS AND GREETINGS

Jill Johnson's tips for holiday decorating with coastal style

DECORATE A KIDS' TREE

"I put a flocked Christmas tree in the playroom, and we trim it with sea creature ornaments. My boys are obsessed with whales and sharks, so there are plenty of those hanging from the branches."

HANG ABALONE WREATHS

Switch up traditional greenery with wreaths made from these iridescent seashells. Johnson hangs them on windows and even tucks them into shelving.

COLOR-CODE YOUR RIBBON

Johnson ties her palette together (and syncs it with her year-round decor) by using the same 1¾-inch turquoise ribbon on gifts, around wreaths, and in garlands.

Manhattan Beach, just a three-minute walk from her home. And while her approach to designing her own interiors often hinges on custom flourishes and embellishments—from the Moorish window details and Moroccan tiles she included at the front door to the bespoke trim she added to the living room sofas—Johnson says: "I have to remember that decorating a room is like planning an outfit. You don't want too much going on. Success depends greatly on balance and restraint."

An ocean-inspired palette of greens, dark blues, and aquas keeps the living spaces in harmony, and tops Johnson's "love" list. "It's pretty wonderful to be able to come home to a soothing environment that reminds me of the sea," she says. In her bedroom, for example, the soft, watery tones of an aqua dhurrie and paisley-print draperies pair with a minty glass chandelier for a cool, coastal vibe. In the boys' playroom, though, she took a more whimsical approach and papered the walls in a graphic black-and-white whale pattern.

In the main living spaces and bedrooms, grounding elements such as oatmeal-colored dining room cushions, jute rugs, and grasscloth wallpapers establish a neutral base for layering in the seafaring blues and greens. Oyster-white sofas with Johnson's signature trim anchor the living room. "Believe me, my boys are very messy and dirty, but I love the crispness of white, and find it's easy enough to keep clean with a Scotchgard treatment," she notes. "And the turquoise ribbon border takes the look of white sofas up a notch and gives them more of a







tailored look." Johnson added similarly sophisticated detailing to a large cabinet in the same space: Sleek brass library lights illuminate shelving; below, brass wire screens add contrasting texture to cabinet doors. "I like those custom elements, even though our lifestyle is very casual," says Johnson. "Sometimes, adding little details like these can make all the difference."

In the kitchen, an eclectic collection of china and blue-green glassware stars. A veteran flea-market scourer, Johnson puts her mishmash of vintage and modern pieces to everyday use, and keeps it within easy reach. "The open shelving is so much more functional for the things I use daily," she says. She also outfitted the space with both an island—which is ideal for prep—and a peninsula counter, which is a natural congregating spot for guests. "I always host Christmas, so this works great when my family and friends gather," says the California native. The holiday party usually spills over onto the patio (connected to the kitchen and living room through French doors) for roasting marshmallows in the outdoor fireplace. "We string lights outside and play music, the kids skateboard up and down the driveway-it's a great spot," Johnson adds. "I really liked the idea of designing a house that makes it easy for us to do this, to just be together." ■ For more information, see Sources, page 72.

Stephanie Hunt writes home stories, features, essays, and travel pieces from her home in Charleston, South Carolina.



CHRISTINAS SOUTHE BAY AD.C. chef and his family fix the ultimate holiday feast at their historic home on the Chesapeake





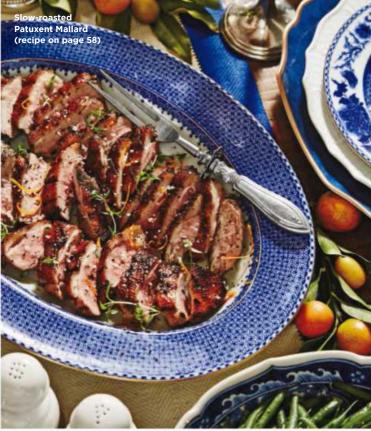














or Robert and Polly Wiedmaier, there's nothing more traditional than celebrating the holidays in their circa-1680 Maryland retreat. "When we found it four years ago, we could tell it was very old, which made it all the more charming," Polly says. The couple discovered the brick-clad home, a former customs house for the British, while searching for a getaway a short drive from Washington, D.C., where Robert is the chef at 10 local restaurants, including his award-winning, Frenchinspired flagship, Marcel's. Robert, a longtime hunter and fisherman, fell in love with the property's 23 waterfront acres; Polly was partial to the home's historic character and spacious living areas (thanks to additions made over the years). And its location directly on the Chesapeake made it even sweeter. "The bay is just one of those places that people enjoy year-round," says Polly. "You can play football on the lawn or sit outside and watch the fishing boats go by in the middle of winter."

Holidays at the Wiedmaier house are rooted in the bounty of the Chesapeake. Polly finds homegrown Christmas decorations in magnolia and boxwood branches—the perfect complement to antique holiday heirlooms, including a collection of vintage European nutcrackers inherited from Robert's mother. The Christmas Day menu follows suit: Robert cooks whatever his land and coastline provide. from oysters to Canada geese, prepared with seasonal flavors such as cinnamon and black currants. "Our dinners here are simple and usually not planned more than a day or two in advance," he says. "So what we cook changes depending on what we have that week." One constant in the Wiedmaier home this season: time spent taking in those stunning views. "Just being on the bay when it's snowing outside and we have the fireplace burning inside makes me happy," says Robert. "There's really no better way to spend a holiday."

₹ THE WIEDMAIER CHRISTMAS FEAST

Slow-roasted Patuxent Mallard

HANDS-ON TIME: 30 minutes **TOTAL TIME:** 2 hours, 35 minutes

- 4 (6-ounce) duck breasts
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme, chopped
- 2 teaspoons Chinese five spice
- 1 tablespoon orange zest
- ½ cup fresh orange juice
- 1. Use a sharp knife to score the skin of the duck breasts in a diamond pattern, being careful not to slice through the flesh. Place in a zip-top plastic bag with remaining ingredients. Refrigerate 2 hours or up to 4 hours.
- 2. Drain duck and pat dry with paper towels; discard marinade. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add duck, skin side down; cook 5 to 6 minutes or until skin is brown and fat begins to render. Increase heat to medium-high, flip duck, and cook 5 to 8 more minutes or until desired degree of doneness.
- **3.** Transfer duck breasts to a cutting board, and let rest 5 minutes before slicing. Makes 6 servings.

Honey Mead-Brined Canada Goose with Cabbage, Currants, and Brûléed Pears

HANDS-ON TIME: 1 hour, 30 minutes **TOTAL TIME:** 10 hours + 10 minutes

- 4 shallots, sliced
- 1 teaspoon mustard seed
- 1 teaspoon coriander seeds
- 3 fresh thyme sprigs
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 6 cups honey mead, divided
- 2 tablespoons plus ½ teaspoon salt, divided
- 2 (8- to 10-ounce) goose breasts
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme, chopped
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper Sautéed Cabbage & Currants (recipe at right) Brûléed Pears (recipe at right)
- **1.** Combine first 5 ingredients, 2 cups honey mead, and 2 tablespoons salt in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat; bring to a boil. Transfer mixture to a large bowl, and let cool to room temperature. Add goose breasts to marinade, cover, and refrigerate 8 to 12 hours.
- 2. Preheat oven to 375°. Drain goose and pat dry with paper towels; discard marinade. Heat olive oil in a large oven-safe skillet over medium-high heat. Add goose breasts, skin sides down, and cook about 6 minutes or until skin is deep golden brown and fat has rendered. Flip goose; cook 1 more minute. Transfer skillet to oven, and roast 10 minutes or until goose is cooked through.

3. Meanwhile, cook remaining 4 cups honey mead in a medium saucepan over mediumhigh heat about 15 minutes or until reduced to 1 cup. Stir in butter, chopped thyme, pepper, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt. Spoon sauce over cooked goose, and serve with Sautéed Cabbage & Currants and Brûléed Pears. Makes 4 servings.

SAUTÉED CABBAGE & CURRANTS

- 4 bacon slices, chopped
- 1 head napa cabbage, finely chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 2 tablespoons black currants
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Cook bacon in a large saucepan over medium heat about 7 minutes or until golden brown and crispy. Add cabbage and cook, stirring, about 5 minutes or until cabbage wilts and reduces in volume by half. Add butter and remaining ingredients, stirring until butter melts. Makes 4 servings.

BRÛLÉED **P**EARS

- 4 small, firm pears, peeled and halved
- 1 cup dry white wine, such as Chablis
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 4 teaspoons light brown sugar

Place first 4 ingredients in a medium saucepot with water to cover; bring to a simmer over medium-heat. Reduce heat to low, and cook 15 minutes or until pears are easily pierced with a knife. Drain pears; discard cinnamon stick. Transfer pears, cut sides up, to a heat-safe baking dish, and pat tops dry. Sprinkle with brown sugar. Use a torch to caramelize the sugar, or place under the broiler preheated to high 1 minute or until sugar is dark brown and melted. Makes 4 servings.

Caramelized Sweet Potatoes and Brussels Sprouts

HANDS-ON TIME: 5 minutes **TOTAL TIME:** 35 minutes

- 2 sweet potatoes, peeled and diced
- 16 ounces Brussels sprouts, halved
- 2 garlic cloves, chopped
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- **1.** Place 2 rimmed baking pans in the oven, and preheat oven to 375°. Toss sweet potatoes, Brussel sprouts, and garlic with olive oil and melted butter. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
- **2.** Divide mixture between preheated pans; roast 25 minutes or until tender and golden brown, stirring vegetables and rotating pans once after 10 minutes. Makes 6 servings.

Smith Island Cake

HANDS-ON TIME: 1 hour, 35 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 6 hours. 20 minutes

- 1 vanilla bean
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 cup canola oil
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 6 large eggs
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt

Chocolate Ganache Icing (recipe below)

- **1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and line 8 (8½-inch) round disposable cake pans with parchment paper.
- 2. Split vanilla bean lengthwise, and scrape out seeds. Whisk together vanilla bean seeds, sugar, and next 4 ingredients in a large bowl. Whisk together flour and next 3 ingredients in a second large bowl. Fold flour mixture into sugar mixture just until flour is incorporated.
- **3.** Divide batter evenly (about ¾ cup each) among prepared pans. Bake about 12 to 15 minutes or until cakes are light golden brown and centers spring back when touched. Let cool in pans on wire racks 10 minutes. Turn cakes out onto wire racks to cool completely. Carefully cut any domed tops from layers with a serrated knife.
- **4.** Place 1 cake layer on cake stand; spread with about ½ cup Chocolate Ganache lcing using an offset spatula. Repeat with remaining layers and remaining icing. Coat the top and sides of the cake with a thin layer of icing; reserve remaining icing. Chill cake 1 hour.
- **5.** Reheat reserved Chocolate Ganache Icing in a double boiler until smooth and pourable. Place cake over a wire rack on a rimmed baking pan. Starting at the center of the cake, pour icing in a slow, steady stream over top of cake, moving to outer edges and letting icing flow down the sides of the cake. Chill cake about 1 hour or until set. Carefully transfer cake to serving plate. Serve at room temperature. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

CHOCOLATE GANACHE ICING

- 4 cups heavy cream
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 6 (4-ounce) bittersweet chocolate bars, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt

Combine cream and corn syrup in a medium pot over medium heat; bring just to a simmer, stirring frequently. Place chocolate in a large bowl. Pour hot cream mixture over chocolate, add salt, and let stand 2 minutes. Whisk until smooth. Let cool to room temperature, and then chill about 45 minutes or until thickened and spreadable, stirring after 20 minutes.





Merry Coupon.

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What To Serve Friends and Family

GATHER

COOKIES & COCKTAILS

Shake up your holiday open house menu with these fun pairings of sweet treats and festive sips

PISCO SUNSET

Combine 3 ounces (6 tablespoons) pisco, 2 ounces (4 tablespoons) Campari, 1½ ounces (3 tablespoons) fresh orange juice, and 1½ ounces (3 tablespoons) pear nectar in an ice-filled cocktail shaker; shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled (about 30 seconds). Strain into a glass, and garnish with an orange twist, if desired. Makes 1 cocktail.

MENU

Spiced Alfajores, p. 64 + Pisco Sunset, p. 61

Browned Butter &
Chocolate Chunk
Cookies with Flake Salt
+ Creamy Milk Punch, p. 63

Hazelnut, Rosemary, and Plum Linzer Cookies, p. 63 * Rosy Apple Sparkler, p. 62

Coconut-Almond Biscotti, p. 63 + Boozy Almond-Honey Hot Chocolate, p. 62

Salted Macadamia-White Chocolate Chunk Bars + Shaken Piña Colada, p. 64





CREAMY MILK PUNCH

Combine 2 ounces (4 tablespoons) whole milk, 1½ ounces (3 tablespoons) horchata liqueur (such as RumChata), ¾ ounce (1½ tablespoons) bourbon, ½ ounce (1 tablespoon) amaretto liqueur, and ¼ teaspoon fresh lime juice in an ice-filled cocktail shaker; shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled (about 30 seconds). Strain into a glass. Dust with grated nutmeg, if desired. Makes 1 cocktail.

Browned Butter & Chocolate Chunk Cookies with Flake Salt

HANDS-ON TIME: 25 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 1 hour, 55 minutes

- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- ²/₃ cup light brown sugar, packed
- 1 teaspoon instant coffee granules
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 11/4 teaspoons flake salt, divided
- 2 large eggs
- 1 large egg yolk
- 21/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 11/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 8 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped into chunks
- **1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2. Combine sugars and coffee granules in the bowl of a stand mixer. Melt butter in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Cook 3 to 4 minutes or until butter bubbles and begins to brown. Pour butter over sugar mixture; beat at medium-low speed for 2 minutes. Beat in vanilla and ½ teaspoon salt. Add eggs and egg yolk; beat until just combined.
- **3.** Whisk together flour, cornstarch, baking powder, and baking soda in a medium bowl. Add flour mixture to sugar mixture; mix at low speed until just combined. Stir in chocolate. Refrigerate dough at least 1 hour.
- 4. Scoop half of dough into 16 equal balls (about 1½ tablespoons each) and place 8 balls, about 2 inches apart, onto each prepared baking sheet. Bake 8 minutes. Rotate pans; bake 6 to 7 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Sprinkle cookies evenly with ¼ teaspoon salt; let cool on baking sheets 5 minutes. Transfer to wire racks to cool completely. Repeat with remaining dough and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Makes 16 servings.

Hazelnut, Rosemary, and Plum Linzer Cookies

HANDS-ON TIME: 55 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 3 hours, 30 minutes

- 1/2 cup hazelnut meal
- 3/4 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 large egg
- 1 large egg yolk
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1½ teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup plum preserves
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar
- **1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 2. Sprinkle hazelnut meal into an even layer on a jelly-roll pan; bake 6 minutes or until golden and fragrant. Let cool completely.
- **3.** Combine butter and sugar in a large bowl. Beat with a mixer at medium speed for 5 minutes or until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla. Add egg and egg yolk, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition.
- **4.** Lightly spoon flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Whisk together flour, hazelnut meal, rosemary, and salt in a bowl. Add flour mixture to butter mixture; beat at low speed until just combined. (Dough will be a little sticky.) Divide dough in half, and shape each half into a 4-inch disc. Wrap with plastic wrap; chill 2 hours.
- **5.** Roll 1 dough disc into ¼-inch thickness on a well-floured surface; cut with a 2½-inch rectangular scalloped-edge cookie cutter to form 18 cookies, rerolling dough scraps as necessary. Repeat with remaining dough disc; use a 1½-inch rectangular scalloped-edge cookie cutter to remove centers of 18 rectangles.
- **6.** Arrange cookies 1 inch apart on prepared baking sheets. Chill cookies on baking sheets 30 minutes. Bake 13 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove from pans; let cool completely on wire racks.
- 7. Spread center of each whole cookie with 1 teaspoon preserves. Sprinkle cutout cookies with powdered sugar. Place 1 cutout cookie on top of each whole cookie. Makes 9 servings.

Coconut-Almond Biscotti

HANDS-ON TIME: 45 minutes
TOTAL TIME: 2 hours, 20 minutes

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 2½ cups unsweetened coconut flakes, lightly toasted, divided
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 large eggs
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, melted
- 11/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup slivered almonds, toasted
- 4 teaspoons coconut milk
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- **1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper
- 2. Combine sugar and 1 cup coconut in the bowl of a food processer; process until finely ground. Combine coconut mixture, flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Whisk eggs in a small bowl. Remove 1 tablespoon egg and combine with 1 tablespoon water in a small bowl; set aside. Add butter, remaining eggs, and vanilla to flour mixture; mix at low speed until almost combined. Add almonds and ½ cup coconut flakes; mix until just combined.
- **3.** Divide dough into 2 (8- x 4-inch) loaves on prepared baking sheet. Brush loaves with egg-water mixture. Bake 35 minutes or until lightly browned. Let stand 15 minutes.
- **4.** Decrease oven temperature to 325°. Cut each loaf crosswise into 16 (½-inch) slices. Arrange slices, cut sides down, on baking sheet. Bake 25 more minutes or until lightly browned. Let cool completely.
- 5. Whisk together coconut milk and powdered sugar in a medium bowl until smooth. Spread mixture over ½ of each biscotti; sprinkle biscotti evenly with remaining 1 cup coconut flakes. Makes 16 servings.

BOUNTY (GATHER) **SHAKEN PIÑA COLADA** Combine 3 ounces (6 tablespoons) fresh pineapple juice, 2 ounces Salted Macadamia-(4 tablespoons) amaretto White Chocolate Bars liqueur, 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) white rum, 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) fresh lime juice, 1 ounce (2 tablespoons) cream of coconut, and 3 dashes of angostura bitters in an ice-filled cocktail shaker; shake vigorously until thoroughly chilled (about 30 seconds). Strain into a crushed ice-filled glass. Garnish with a fresh pineapple wedge and a maraschino cherry, if desired. Makes 1 cocktail.

Salted Macadamia-White Chocolate Bars

HANDS-ON TIME: 20 minutes **TOTAL TIME:** 50 minutes

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2/3 cup packed brown sugar
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- cup coarsely chopped roasted, salted macadamia nuts
- 8 ounces white chocolate, chopped
- 1. Whisk together first 3 ingredients in a medium bowl. Combine sugars and butter in the bowl of a stand mixer; beat at medium speed 5 minutes or until fluffy. Add vanilla and eggs, mixing until just combined. Add flour mixture, mixing at low speed until almost combined. Add nuts and chocolate, mixing until just combined. Chill dough 30 minutes.

- 2. Preheat oven to 350°. Line a 13- x 9-inch baking pan with parchment paper.
- 3. Press chilled dough into prepared baking pan; bake 22 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Transfer pan to wire rack to cool. Cut into bars. Makes 20 servings.

Spiced Alfajores (pictured on page 61)

HANDS-ON TIME: 1 hour, 20 minutes TOTAL TIME: 2 hours, 30 minutes

- 21/4 cups cornstarch
- 11/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper
- 18 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces and softened
- 10 tablespoons granulated sugar
- egg yolks
- tablespoons orange juice
- teaspoon vanilla extract
- 10 tablespoons prepared dulce de leche
- 3 tablespoons powdered sugar

- 1. Lightly spoon cornstarch and flour into dry measuring cups; level with a knife. Whisk together cornstarch, flour, salt, baking powder, cinnamon, and red pepper in a bowl.
- 2. Combine butter and sugar in the bowl of a stand mixer; beat at medium-high speed for 3 minutes or until light and fluffy. Reduce speed to medium. Add egg yolks, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Mix in orange juice and vanilla. Add flour mixture: beat at low speed until combined. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface; press into a (1-inch-thick) rectangle. Wrap tightly with plastic wrap; chill 1 hour.
- 3. Preheat oven to 350°. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- 4. Divide dough in half. Roll half of dough to 1/4-inch thickness on a well-floured surface. Cut into 40 cookies with a 2-inch round, scalloped-edge cookie cutter, rerolling dough scraps as necessary. Arrange cookies ½ inch apart on prepared baking sheets. Bake 10 minutes or until cookies are set. (Edges will not brown.) Let cool completely on wire racks. Repeat with remaining dough.
- 5. Flip 20 cookies over. Top each with 1½ teaspoons dulce de leche. Top with remaining cookies. Sift powdered sugar evenly over sandwiched cookies. Makes 20 servings. - Recipes by Katie Barreira, Robin Bashinsky, Darcy Lenz, and Deb Wise ■





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IN MY KITCHEN around the holidays, space is at a premium. The sounds of Charles Brown and Otis Redding fill the room where friends and family are gathered, many helping with the cooking, others just hanging out. Because my family tends to share the cooking duties, there's quite a bit of jockeying for access to the stove. (Trying to find a free square inch in the oven is a futile effort.) With spice-scented pies, mulled bourbon or wine, and heady aromas of slow roasts in the air, I like to diversify the traditional holiday menu with my simple, one-pot mussel stew.

Mussels are a favorite in my house year-round, but they're at peak flavor in the winter, with beautiful obsidian-blue shells holding the richly orange meat and a briny liquor that infuses the entire dish. Though also available wild, the vast majority of mussels are sustainably farmed and quite affordable. They're not only easy to prepare-requiring just a simple scrub and removal of the "beard," thin threads that attach the mussel to rocks and ropes—but they also have the added benefit of forcing us to slow down, as we remove each bite from its shell, allowing the time to sit and truly enjoy a respite from the chaotic season.

Many cooks are most familiar with mussels steamed in wine and aromatics, served with nothing more than crusty bread or French fries. But mussels can also star beautifully in more complex, richly flavored dishes. This recipe (on page 68) borrows from the great tradition of convenient, one-pot seafood stews, such as the bouillabaisse of Marseille, or cioppino from San Francisco.

These warming, hearty dishes are ideal for holiday entertaining, because they can be made ahead of guests' arrival and only

A YULETIDE STEW

Our new holiday tradition: simplicity. This fresh, one-pot mussel dinner delivers



improve as the flavors come together. Here, the mussels find company with tons of vegetables-fennel, onion, butternut squash—making this a nourishing meal, too. I like to pair the stew with wine. (Find my three favorites for winter dishes on the next page.) Try this dish and you'll see: The aromas of roasted garlic, ginger, lemon, and cloves add not only comfort to your holiday, but also a seasonal potpourri that's just as welcome as the scent of balsam and a roaring fire. >

Mussel Stew

HANDS-ON TIME: 25 minutes TOTAL TIME: 50 minutes

- 1 garlic bulb
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided
- 1 (1-inch) piece fresh peeled ginger
- 1 lemon, halved horizontally
- 3 whole cloves, pressed into lemon halves
- 1 small fennel bulb, sliced into thin wedges
- 1 medium onion, cut into ½-inch pieces (about 2 cups)
- 1 pound butternut squash, diced into ½-inch cubes (about 2 cups)
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 1 (28-ounce) can crushed, peeled San Marzano tomatoes
- 1 bay leaf
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon dried crushed red pepper
- 2 pounds mussels, scrubbed and debearded
- 1/4 cup chopped fennel fronds
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

Baquette

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Cut top of garlic bulb off just to expose cloves, and drizzle with olive oil. Wrap garlic in aluminum foil; roast 1 hour and 10 minutes. Set aside to cool. Squeeze garlic cloves out of bulb; discard papery skin.

- 2. Melt butter in a large saucepan over high heat; add ginger and clove-spiked lemon to pan. Add fennel wedges, onion, and squash. Cook, stirring frequently, 10 minutes or until vegetables are caramelized. Stir in roasted garlic cloves, wine, tomatoes, bay leaf, salt, and red pepper. Bring to a simmer; reduce heat to medium, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, 15 minutes. Increase heat to high. Add mussels to pan; cover and steam 6 minutes or until mussels open. (Discard any that do not.)
- **3.** Remove ginger and lemon from pan. Stir in fennel fronds, parsley, and lemon juice. Serve stew with a crusty baguette. Makes 4 servings.

FLEXING YOUR MUSSELS

Before cooking mussels, rinse them under cold running water to remove any grit. If the mussels have beards, or thin threads attached to the shell, pinch them between your thumb and index finger, and pull them away to remove. Discard mussels with broken shells. Gently tap any open mussels—if they close, they are fine to use: if they remain

WHAT TO DRINK

\$\$\$

IRON HORSE 2010 OCEAN RESERVE BLANC DE BLANCS

(Green Valley, CA; \$50) What are holidays without bubbles? This sparkler pairs especially well with seafood, and the company gives back by donating \$4 for every bottle sold to the National Geographic Ocean Initiative.

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WILLAKENZIE ESTATE 2012 GAMAY NOIR

(Willamette Valley, OR; \$26) Light, acidic, and floral, this wine is easy to drink and remarkably friendly with seafood.

\$

L'ECOLE NO. 41 2012 CHENIN BLANC

(Columbia Valley, WA; \$15)
This rich and luxurious wine, scented with hints of tropical fruit, retains a fresh and lively quality to pair with the coldweather flavors of this recipe.

BECKY LUIGART-STAYNER; PROP STYLING BY MARY CLAYTON CARL FOOD STYLING BY EMILY NABORS HALL



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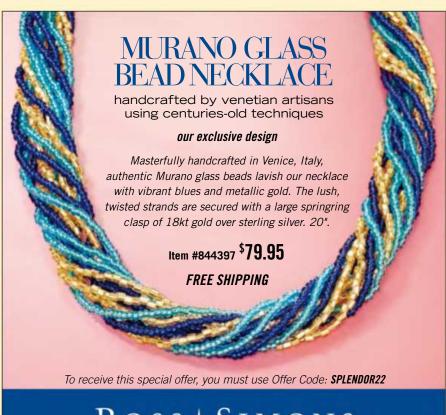
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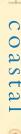




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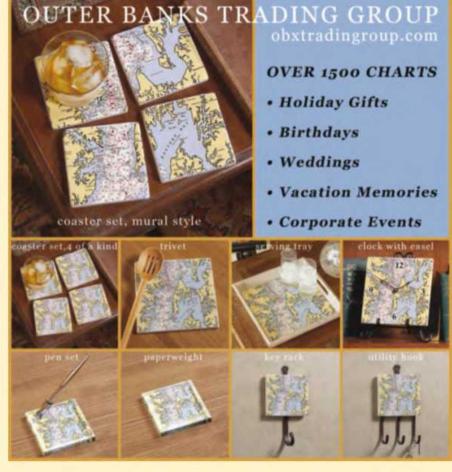














WHAT'S NEW ONLINE

BEST BEACH YOGA RETREATS

The perfect way to start the new year off on the right foot? With it firmly planted on the sand! At these blissful coastal yoga retreats, your first (or last!) vacation of the year will be one for relaxing, reflecting, and rejuvenating. Find 23 of our top picks, from Mexico to Indonesia, at coastalliving.com/yoga-retreats



CL: What's your go-to coastal comfort food?

Sarah Pritchard. Christchurch, New Zealand

Crayfish, scallops, mussels, and oysters! Straight out of the water and into the pan (apart from the oysters), with butter and garlic. Yum!

WHERE TO FIND WHAT'S SHOWN IN THIS ISSUE

MAKEOVER MAGIC page 27: Architectural designer Mark Schnell, Schnell Urban Design; schnellurbandesign .com, Interior designer Paige Schnell, Tracery Interiors: traceryinteriors.com. Builder Peter Horn, Artisan, Inc.; artisan-builds.com. **Throughout:** Exterior doors, Integrity; marvin.com/integrity. Lumber, U.S. Lumber; uslumber .com. Wood flooring, Sticks & Stones Dist., Inc.; sticksand stonesdist.com. Cabinet and interior door hardware, Brandino Brass; brandinobrass.com. Exterior and **porches, pages 27-29:** Exteria siding and Cedarmill Allura trim, U.S. Lumber. Siding in Amherst Gray, trim and railing in Cloud Cover, porch floor in Chelsea Gray, and base in Kendall Charcoal, Benjamin Moore; benjamin moore.com. Lighting, Bevolo; bevolo.com. Furniture, Lloyd Flanders; lloydflanders.com. Chair upholstery in Spectrum Peacock, draperies in Cabana Citron, and nillows in Extend Breeze and Shore Citron, Sunbrella; sunbrella.com. Sunbrella throws, Textillery; textillery.com. Sunglasses, Costa; costadelmar.com. Rug, vase, lanterns, napkins, and planters, Wayfair; wayfair.com. Tray, Serena & Lily; serenaandlily.com. Rope tiebacks, Restoration Hardware; rh.com. Oyster wreaths, Wind & Weather; windandweather.com. Bike, Sunburst Beach Vacations; sunburstbeachvacations.com. **Living room, page 30:** Walls, trim, molding, and ceiling in White Dove, Benjamin Moore. Draperies in Sunbrella Cabana Classic, sectional in Sunbrella Spinnaker Salt, chair and ottoman in Sunbrella Ralph Smoke, and pillows in Sunbrella Keaton Mist, Fife Agua, Ralph Smoke, and Spinnaker Salt, Lee Industries; leeindustries.com. Pillows in Reflex Classic and Shore Classic, Sunbrella. Eugene pendant and Bistro sconce, Circa Lighting; circalighting.com. Sunbrella rug, Colonial Mills, Inc.; colonialmills.com. Sunbrella throw, Textillery. Cocktail table, The Old Wood Co.; theoldwood co.com. Console, Dunes and Duchess; dunesandduchess .com. Storage bin and vase, Wayfair. *UnNoticed but Perfect After Glow* by Mallory Page; mallorypage.com. Additional art, Courtney J. Garrett; courtneyjgarrett.com. Additional accessories, Tracery. **Kitchen, page 31:** Walls, trim, molding, and ceiling in White Dove, and cabinetry in Raccoon Fur, Benjamin Moore. Sink and faucet, Moen; moen.com. Marble, Artistic Stone Works; artisticstone worksinc.net. Speartek Tile backsplash, Infinity Flooring; infinityfloors.com. Wolf range, hood, freezer fridge, and dishwasher, Builder Specialties, Inc.; builderspecialties .net. Cabinetry, Kay Fuller and Sons; kayfullerandsons .com. Coffee/espresso maker, Wayfair. Rug, vases, dishware, glassware, and flatware, Wayfair. Corkscrew art, Barbara Cosgrove; barbaracosgrovelamps.com. Additional accessories, Tracery. **Dining room, page 31:** Walls, trim, and molding in White Dove, Benjamin Moore. Draperies in Cabana Classic, Sunbrella. Chairs and drum ottoman in Ferris Aquamarine, Lee Industries. Dining table, Bradley; bradley-usa.com. Dinnerware and glass vase, Wayfair. Additional art and accessories, Tracery. Family room, page 31: Walls, trim, molding, ceiling, and millwork in High Gloss Slate Teal, Benjamin Moore. Morris lantern and Academy map light, Circa Lighting. Chair in Ferris Sapphire and drum ottoman in Summit Parisian Blue Lee Industries Forest and Hummingbirds by Justin Gaffrey; justinmadebyhand .com. Rug, stools, and white vases, Wayfair. Gold vase, Arteriors; arteriorshome.com. Granite fireplace, Artistic Stone Works. Cabinetry, Kay Fuller and Sons. Clam shell, Barbara Cosgrove. Pillow, Lacefield Designs; lacefielddesigns.com. Additional accessories, Tracery **Guest room, page 32:** Walls, door, trim, and ceiling in Wood Lawn Blue, Benjamin Moore. French library wall lamps, Katie pendant, and fluted spire table lamp, Circa Lighting. Bed, Reid Classics; reidclassics.com. Duvet cover, quilt, and shams, Coyuchi; coyuchi.com. Ortega drapery fabric, Romo; romo,com, Roman shade, Horizons Window Fashions; horizonshades.com. Sunbrella throw, Textillery. Rug, Wayfair. Additional accessories, Tracery. Master bath, page 32: Ceiling in White Dove and vanity in Black, Benjamin Moore. Canery Beau wallpaper, Meg Braff Designs; megbraffdesigns.com. Faucet and towel rings, Moen. Marble countertop, Artistic Stone Works Cabinetry, Kay Fuller and Sons. Boston Functional Triple sconce, Circa Lighting. Linens, Coyuchi. Vase, CB2; cb2.com. Additional accessories, Tracery. **Study, page 33:** Walls, trim, and ceiling in White Dove and Covington Blue, Benjamin Moore. Daybed in Riva Sunglass, Lee Industries. Charlton wall light, Deco Pharmacy floor lamp, Katie pendant, and Carmel table lamp, Circa Lighting, Roman shade, Horizons Window Fashions: horizonshades.com. High hat table, Barbara Cosgrove. Draperies and pillow in Beehive Charcoal, and additional art, accessories, and accent pillows, Tracery. Wine garden, pages 34-35: Pavilion and drapery in Sunbrella Saxson Cascade, Artcraft Awning Co; artcraft awning.com. Settees in Sea Glass with Sunbrella

Spectrum Graphite upholstery fabric, Loom Accessories

fire tables, and Parsons end tables, Lloyd Flanders. Pillows in Fretwork Pewter, Sunbrella. Café lights, Pottery Barn. Wineglasses, Ballard Designs; ballarddesigns.c

DECK THE SHORE page 40: Beach house design, Beau Clowney (beauclowney.com) and Jenny Keenan (jenny keenaninteriordesign). Little Miss Sunshine, pages 40-41: Tree, Tuesday Morning; tuesdaymorning.com. Tree topper, Amazon; amazon.com. Anchor ornaments and whale ornaments, Cody Foster & Co.; 402/376-3369. Yellow ornaments, Christmas Lights Etc.; christmaslights etc.com. Gift wrap, Paper Source (papersource.com) and Zazzle (zazzle.com). **The Frosty Flamingo, pages 42–43:** Vickerman tree, Wayfair, wayfair.com. Planter, Amazon. Vintage glass ornaments, Great Vintage Fun; etsy.com/shop/greatyintagefun, Flamingo ornaments Cody Foster & Co. Jade globes, Serena & Lily; serenaand lily.com. Gift tags, Moglea; moglea.com. Shale Green ornaments, Christmas Lights Etc. Ribbon and papers, Paper Source. 9125 Spool Chairs, CR Laine; crlaine.com. Solaris Porcelain upholstery, Sunbrella; sunbrella.com. Bukhara pillows in Pink/Orange, Peter Dunham; peter dunhamtextiles.com. Montouk Stripe Rug, Lulu and Georgia; Iuluandgeorgia.com. **The Crafty Beachcomber,** pages 44-45: Tree topper, Baskauta 27; etsy.com/shop/baskauta27. Glass floats, At Home; athome.com. Sargent Art glitter glue, Zerbee; zerbee.com. Floating Feather ornaments, Cody Foster & Co. Soft lavender ornaments, Christmas Lights Etc. Shell garland, Beach Grass Cottage; beachgrasscottage.com. Lokta Bean White gift wrap, Paper Source. Handdrawn Herringbone gift wrap, Minted; minted.com. Desmona lounge chair, Selamat; selamatdesigns.com. Assembly Home Isolde Kilim rug, Urban Outfitters; urbanoutfitters.com

SANDY & BRIGHT page 46: Interior design, Waterleaf Interiors; waterleafinteriors.com. Draftsman Dale Adams. Builder Andy Johnson; 310/941-8652. Landscape design, Teryl Designs; teryldesigns.com. Most items available through Waterleaf Interiors. All window shades, Horizons Window Fashions; horizonshades.com Kitchen, page 46: Wallpaper, Elizabeth Dow; elizabeth dow.com. Paule Marrot artwork, Waterleaf Interiors. **Breakfast nook, pages 46-47:** Wallpaper, Elizabeth Dow. Table, Bernhardt; bernhardt.com. Loom chairs, JANUS et Cie; janusetcie.com. Bamboo chairs, Palecek; palecek .com. Pillow fabric, Peter Dunham; peterdunhamtextiles .com. Chandelier, Visual Comfort; visualcomfort.com. Painting by Tricia Strickfaden; tsmodernart.com. **Living** room, page 48: Walls and ceiling in Oxford White, Benjamin Moore; benjaminmoore.com. Rug, Merida meridastudio.com. Sofas, Waterleaf Interiors. Sofa fabric, World Linen; worldlinen.com, Pillow fabrics, Schumacher; fschumacher.com. Zebra ottomans and small side table, Oly; olystudio.com. Sconces, Visual Comfort. Lamp and coffee table, Bunny Williams; bunnywilliamshome.com. Drapery fabric, Duralee; duralee.com. Reindeer, Waterleaf Interiors. Stockings, Anthropologie; anthropologie.com. Bar, page 48: Cabinet in Oxford White, Benjamin Moore. Wallpaper, Cole & Son; cole-and-son,com, Wreath, Roost; roostco.com. **Entry, page 49:** Wallpaper, Phillip Jeffries; phillipjeffries.com. Settee, Waterleaf Interiors. Settee fabric, China Seas; quadrillefabrics.com. Rug, Madeline Weinrib; madelineweinrib.com. Stair runner, Vagabond Vintage; vagabondvintage.com. Vent, Reggio Registers; reggioregister.com. **Playroom, page 50:** Walls and ceiling in Oxford White, Benjamin Moore. Geoff McFetridge wallpaper, Walnut Wallpaper; walnutwallpaper.com. Rug, Jaipur; jaipurrugs.com. Daybed, IKEA; ikea.com. Daybed fabric, Schumacher. Pillows, Jonathan Adler; jonathan adler.com. Coffee table, Pottery Barn; potterybarn.com Tree, Waterleaf Interiors. **Bedroom (top), page 51:** Wallpaper, Ralph Lauren; ralphlauren.com. Quilt and white shams, John Robshaw Textiles; johnrobshaw.com. Floor lamp, Jamie Young; jamieyoung.com. Seahorse pillow fabric, Plumwich; jadesignstudio.com. Rug, Jaipur. **Bedroom (bottom), page 51:** Walls in Distant Horizon, Dunn-Edwards; dunnedwards.com. Chest, Lillian August; lillianaugust.com. Rug, Madeline Weinrib. Lamp and mirror, Jamie Young. Duvet and shams, thomaspaul; shopthomaspaul.com. **Patio, page 52:** Brick fireplace in Super White, Benjamin Moore. Stool, Emissary; emissary usa.com. Love seat and cabana chairs, Century Furniture; centuryfurniture.com. Upholstery fabric, Sunbrella; sunbrella.com. Pillow fabric, Peter Dunham. **Exterior**, page 52: Door/shutters in Black Onyx and trim in Super White, Benjamin Moore. Planters, Emissary. Master bedroom, page 53: Walls in Snowflake, Dunn-Edwards. Drapery fabric, Plumwich, Chandelier, Ro Sham Beaux ro-sham-beaux.com. Quilt and shams, Nandini; nandini la.com. Ottoman fabric, Schumacher. Pillow fabric, Madeline Weinrib. Rug, Calypso St. Barth; calypsostbarth .com. Bedside table, Bungalow 5; bungalow5.com. Headboard, lamps, and ottoman, Waterleaf Interiors.







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502 Building

11 Belgard Hardscapes

- 12 Fiberon
- 13 VELUX Skylights

TRAVEL

503 Alaska

17 ALASKA

504 Colorado

18 Colorado

505 Florida

- 19 Bradenton & Anna Maria Island & Longboat Key
- 20 VISIT FLORIDA

506 North Carolina

- 21 Bald Head Island
- 22 North Carolina's Brunswick Islands
- 23 The Crystal Coast
- 24 The North Carolina Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development

25 Wilmington, NC's Historic River District & Island Beaches

507 Rhode Island

26 South County Tourism Council

508 South Carolina

- 27 Beaufort, SC
- 28 Charleston

509 Texas

29 Texas Tourism

510 Virginia

30 Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau

(COASTAL VIEW)



32 BOATS

A father's recount of his seafaring life is his daughter's greatest Christmas memory by Jennifer trainer thompson

DURING A VISIT with my father over the holidays (a few weeks before he died, it turned out), he told me he'd been having trouble sleeping, but instead of counting sheep, he had been counting the boats that he'd built or restored in his life. I asked how many he was up to.

"32," he replied.

Sometimes you think you know someone well, and then an offhand remark will trigger a vein so rich that you can't believe your good fortune. He told of each boat in chronological order, with perfect recall and Yankee droll. It was the arc of a sailor's life.

He got his first at age 7, an 8-foot punt that a kid sold him for 50 cents. Working on it, he and the boy got into a tug-of-war on his grandfather's dock. The other boy let go, and my father went backward into the water. Trouble was, he didn't know how to swim. He managed to splash his way to shore quickly, and when he ran up the lawn to tell what happened, he found his grandfather in his wheelchair, tears on his cheeks. A few years before, a stroke had rendered the man speechless and unable to move. He'd witnessed the entire scene.

"It ended up as firewood," my father replied, when I asked what became of it.

His next boat was a Swampscott dory, a fishing boat that could be launched in the surf. My father's was leaky; his grandfather gave it to him as long as he agreed to only keep it tied to the dock.

"I bailed but didn't sail," my father quipped.

At age 10, he decided to build a boat—an 8-foot kayak—then built six more, starting at age 11. He loved bikes, as well, and he'd bicycle down to the Charles River with one of his kayaks balanced on his shoulders.

After college in the 1940s, he moved to California and built more kayaks, alongside guys on the beach who loved woodworking as much as he loved riding the surfboards they built in their garages. One was Hobie Alter, who built balsa boards and later the Hobie Cat.

Sailors inevitably work their way up to a serious boat, and Dad's was a 21½-foot Herreshoff Islander. (Every winning America's Cup boat from 1893 to 1934 was built in the Herreshoff yard.) The boat's name was *Queequeg*, after the cannibal

harpooner in *Moby-Dick*, and Dad fixed it up with a friend after moving back to New England. My father went on to win many races in it just 20 miles from New Bedford, Massachusetts, where Queequeg became friends with a sailor called Ishmael.

When I was 4, we hitched up that boat and moved to Maine, where my father bought a wood-flour mill. One morning an explosion ripped through the mill, burning it to the ground. My parents left Maine dead broke. It would be five years before he could afford a decent boat again. He consoled himself by puttering in his garage with a sunfish, a rowboat, a flatbottom pirogue, and a skiff rescued from the dump. When he started a new company, it was time for another good-size boat.

The first was a 29-foot sloop he bought named *Siren*. Why anyone would name a boat after the women whose songs lured sailors onto the rocks beats me, but we didn't change the name. (It's considered bad luck.) She was aptly named—when Hurricane Doria bore down on Buzzards Bay, she was dashed on the rocks.

One winter Dad restored a 100-year-old, 18-foot canoe built by the founder of Old Town Canoe Company. (Dad followed it up with a second canoe, I suspect to name one "Tippy Canoe" and the other "Tyler Too.")

When dad turned 75 and my mother became ill, she suggested they give up sailing. He did, reluctantly. After she passed away, he was back at it within hours, ordering a kayak kit. He also messed about with a Poulsbo launch named *Poco Loco*, which maybe was what people thought when they saw a 76-year-old alone on his boat.

But he missed sailing, so at 78 he got a Herreshoff 12½, also known as a Buzzards Bay Boy's Boat. She was a honey of a boat and his last one. Designed in 1914, she is one of the prettiest small boats of all time. He'd sail her out on the bay, deftly bringing her up to the mooring, just like he'd done with boats for more than 70 years.

Seven Christmases later, I have his list of 32 boats. What a gift.

Three-time James Beard nominee Jennifer Trainer Thompson is the author of more than 18 books; Fresh Fish is out this spring.



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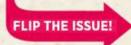
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CHARLESTON, S.C. The Must-See Soul of the South

A jewel box destination that looks like it has been painted in watercolor, Charleston, South Carolina, is a visual feast of cobblestone streets, pastel colored homes, flickering carriage lanterns, and historic landmarks.

Travelers love Charleston, where church steeples not skyscrapers dot the skyline. Life is accompanied by a gentle rustling of palmetto fronds and lyrical sea island accents.

Every meal is savored and no one is a stranger for long.

This winter, take a roadtrip to Charleston and let this special destination enliven your senses.

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nber 2015 / January 2016 Off-the-Grid **Getaways** F5 Where To Go, What **To Wear** Six of the hottest destinations for 2016, paired with perfect looks to shop now and pack soon F8 Puerto Rico for Christmas The most beautiful (not to mention the tastiest) place that's simply crazy about the holiday F13 The Best Cruises of 2016 See the world in a whole new way with our picks for this year's top sea journeys. F21 South for the Winter Three unforgettable getaways that will get you warm and wonderfully happy this season APP RECOMMENDATIONS Look for this icon Fly south to Little Palm throughout the FLIP to get Island, Florida (plus more great apps to download for easy, inspired travel. getaways on page F21). PHOTOGRAPH BY THAYER ALLYSON GOWDY December 2015/January 2016 COASTAL LIVING m F3

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WHERE TO GO, WHAT TO WEAR

This year's hottest destinations, with the perfect looks to match



BIZA: MICHELE FALZONE/GETTY IMAGES, COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS (3, 5); EVERGLADES: RANDY WELLS/GETTY IMAGES, COURTESY OF MANUFACTURER (1); ALL OTHER IMAGES: BRIAN HENN/PRODUCT STYLING BY JESSIE LIEBMAN

1 Valia Gabriel Armathia Sandals in Rose Metal/Tan. \$235, Atrium: 305/695-0757 2 Marysia Venice Jumpsuit in Sally Light Stripe, \$407; net-a-porter.com 3 Lola Hats Spinner Hat in Natural/Navy, \$338; Iolahats.com 4 Vitamin A Brena Maillot in Vermilion, \$174; everythingbutwater.com 5 Mar Y Sol Layla Clutch in Navy, \$105; shopmarysol.com

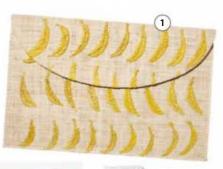


1 Ray-Ban Clubmaster Color Mix Sunglasses in Tortoise/Orange, \$160; ray-ban.com 2 Boys+Arrows Deb the Desperado Bikini Top and Clairee the Criminal Bikini Bottom, both in Sunshine, \$95 each; boysandarrows.com 3 Ále by Alessandra Zenyatta Hat, \$110; solescapes.com 4 LeSwim Milos Color-blocked Sandal, \$288; shop.leswim.it 5 She Made Me Raahi Shorts in Sand, \$99; shemademe.com.au 6 Faithfull The Brand Shrimpton Top in Plain Off White, \$85; faithfullthebrand.com



Cartagena, Colombia

THE PLACE South America's coastal capital is historic, romantic, and blossoming with new hotels and restaurants. THE LOOK Pieces that convey a tropical feel in a refined way are as hot on the beach as they are on city streets.









COLOMBIA: JANE SWEENEY/GETTY COURTESY OF MANUFACTURERS (2,





The Oregon Coast

THE PLACE The outdoors has never been greater than along these 363 miles of breathtaking beaches. Great local food and wine sweeten the deal. THE LOOK Sporty style is the name of the game with this colorblocked neoprene bikini, plus bright leggings, a pullover, and sneakers.



1 bkr Bottle in Lolita, \$35; mybkr.com 2 KREWE du optic The Fly OS Sunglasses in Matte Olive, \$185; kreweduoptic.com **3** Koral Activewear Ridge L/S Top, \$125; koral.com **4** Koral Activewear Lustrous Legging in Tangelo, \$92; koral.com **5** adidas by Stella McCartney Alayta Shoes in Pomgra/Tansan/Luxyel, \$150; adidas.com/us 6 Duskii Underwire Bikini Top and Hipster Bikini Pant, both in Aqua/Fuchsia, \$60 each; duskii.com ■

PUERTO RICO FOR CHRISTMAS

A JOURNEY TO THE ISLAND THAT TAKES THE HOLIDAY TO HEART, AND TO THE TABLE

BY TRACEY MINKIN PHOTOGRAPHS BY SHELLY STRAZIS

IT IS A FEAST OF FEASTS, ON CHRISTMAS DAY.

I'm sitting on a narrow wooden chair near the entry to a sprawling, open-air shack. A corrugated metal roof shields me from the tropical rain that's just blown through and the hot sun that's emerged. Behind me: jungle. On my lap: a Styrofoam takeout box mounded with potato salad, pigeon peas with rice, and pork. Nearby: a bottle of Medalla Light. Luis Ramos has tucked a paper napkin into the top of my beer for some holiday flair; popping out as it does, it looks like a tiny mitre atop a skinny brown Pope.

But that is not what's holy about this day. It's what I'm tucking into with my white plastic fork, which is this mound of lechón asado, the most succulent, most complexly flavored roasted pork I've tasted in my life. It has been carved by Luis's short and sturdy father, Apá, with his broad machete at a massive table at the shack's center. Luis returns to handling the long line of customers snaking out into La Ranchera's dirt parking lot. His sister and cousin ferry groaning takeaway tins of the meat as they're packed up for Puerto Rican families to bring home to their own holiday tables. Felicidades, I hear over and over again, the Puerto Rican contraction of feliz and Navidad. Felicidades indeed, I think to myself. What a happy Christmas this is.

I came to Puerto Rico for Christmas because I had heard there was no more beautiful spot that was so crazy about the holiday. First, about the beauty: more than 300 miles of sun-bleached beaches, with deep azure Atlantic pounding the northern shores and jade Caribbean lapping the southern. Few people, endless palm treesthese are vistas that seem unchanged since Columbus came ashore in 1493.

I arrived expecting natural gifts, but I had no clue what civilization held. With luminous blue cobblestones and colonial streetscapes in sherbet hues, and with a massive, 16th-century cathedral at its heart, Old San Juan occupies the peninsula guarding its harbor with historic, opulent style. It's almost impossible to remember you're in American territory; the city feels utterly European. And with views out to harbor and ocean in every direction, the capital is as stunning as any worldwide.

Finally, Puerto Ricans are, in fact, crazy for Christmas. Grounded in the country's devout Catholicism, the holiday stretches from mid-December right on through Epiphany, or Three Kings' Day, on January 6th, celebrated here as Día de Reyes. Punctuated by masses and embellished with customs-food, drink, parades, and even a special fringe-brimmed straw hat called a pava—this extended holiday is a welcome, authentic antidote to what can feel rushed and overly consumerized at home.

In a land devoted to holiday food and drink, then, where am I to begin? Rum, of course. I become an instant fan of coquitoeggnog that's a rich blend of rum and spices with coconut and condensed milk. When I learn that some coquitos are made with pitorro, a higher-proof moonshine rum that is often homemade by bartenders, I start enjoying small pours of that, as well.

But more than I drink. I eat-in the bustling cafés of Old San Juan and out in the city's farther-flung neighborhoods. I taste arroz con gandules, one of the season's most traditional rice dishes, served with the roasted pork that is the king of the Puerto Rican holiday feast. I fall in love with alcapurria, a root-vegetable fritter with meat at its center, and pasteles, the











OFF-THE-GRID GETAWAYS

labor-intensive cousin to tamales, where a seasoned paste (often featuring mashed cassava) is cooked with shredded chicken inside a tightly wrapped banana leaf. I carve soft bites of *tembleque*, the flan-like holiday custard perfumed with coconut.

I discover chefs who take traditions and reimagine them. At his eponymous restaurant, José Santaella produces plates like gifts from the Magi: the traditional holiday morcilla—blood sausage—minced and wrapped in a crunchy, tender spring roll. His alcapurria is filled with blue crab; his pasteles, with tender bites of codfish. At nearby Casita Miramar, Leonard Perez wows me with sweets: tembleque made with local pumpkins, tres leches cake infused with coquito, and flan sitting brazenly in a pitorro-laced sauce.

I see why Puerto Ricans stretch their Christmas out for weeks: The food is too good, too varied, to enjoy on only one day. How fortunate that Old San Juan makes for such good walking—my holiday eating alternates with explorations on the crest of its fortress walls, along its romantic waterfront esplanade, and up and down its steep and narrow streets.

The city obliges with holiday finery: Doorways are dotted with wreaths and garlands, while parks and squares are home to Nativity scenes that light up at dusk in displays from reverent to riotous. Hundreds of locals come into Old San Juan every night just to see the splendor: packs of jostling, flirty teens, pairs of lovers old and young, and families pushing strollers of sleeping babies bathed in the shimmering, iridescent light.

On my last night, I spy a gang of singers and musicians amassing on the cathedral's broad steps. It's a *parranda*, I realize with delight, the Puerto Rican tradition that adds Halloween mischief to Christmas caroling. Parrandas traditionally group late at night to sing, loud and clanging, outside friends' homes, to haul them from their beds. Hosts are often obligated to invite the revelers in, and long parties ensue, often till dawn.

I follow the parranda into the streets, when a sudden cloudburst sends them laughing and hollering for shelter under

THE DETAILS ==

STAY HERE

The historic Condado Vanderbilt Hotel offers commanding views of the sea and luxe rooms. Rates start at \$350; condadovanderbilt.com. O:live Boutique Hotel is a charming European hideaway with an excellent in-house restaurant and a rooftop bar. Rates start at \$209; oliveboutiquehotel.com.

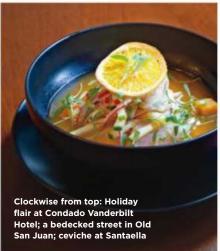
EAT & DRINK HERE

For the best eating in San Juan, allow **Spoon**Food Tours to show you around, from drinking tours to insider dinners with chefs; spoonfood tours.com. During the holidays, **La Ranchera** runs nearly around the clock. Off-season, the pork is only available on weekends. Route 173, Km. 6, Guaynabo;

787/789-4706. Santaella is a welcoming and sophisticated eatery with excellent cocktails; shop.santaellapr.com. Casita Miramar serves traditional dishes made modern in a romantic setting; facebook.com/casitamiramarpr.

Papillon Bistro whips up a traditionally delicious and ample holiday feast; 787/919-0500.







narrow balconies and arched doorways. While the fat raindrops fall and glisten on the blue cobblestones, I think of the nearly 500 Christmases that have marked this byway, and how many feet have trodden this route before me. I think of three kings bearing gifts, and an island that reveres and laughs while it prays and cooks and

eats and drinks. I think of Apá Ramos, who wields his machete in the mountains, and José Santaella, who wraps his pasteles in the town. And I think of how the palms of the Holy Land bend toward their brethren on these beaches, so far away by ship, but under the same glistening stars. And how joyously sacred it is.



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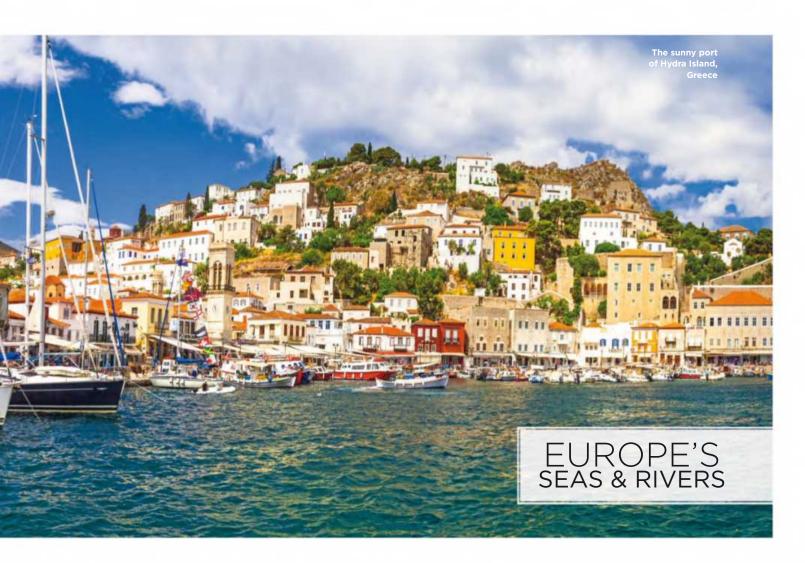
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THE MEDITERRANEAN & GREEK ISLES: The SeaDream II takes full advantage of its 112-passenger yacht size on its seven-night round-trip June 18 sailing from Athens with a transit of the Corinth Canal, a port call in Albania, and stops at Greek ports too small for most cruise ships. Rates start at \$4,726; seadream.com.

ITALY & CROATIA: The stunning scenery of Italy's Amalfi Coast and Croatia's Dalmatian Coast are complemented by gourmet cooking demonstrations, wine tastings, and special winemaker dinners aboard the Sunset Wine Cruise. The eight-night sailing from Rome to Venice with the Sunset magazine team (including Wine Editor Sara Schneider) departs July 20. Rates start at

\$3,299; winecruisegroup.com/sunset-wine-cruise-2016.

NORWAY: Holland America's Norse Legends sailings depart from Rotterdam and Amsterdam, take in Norway's spectacular fjords, and are available in seven-, 14-, and 21-night itineraries. The longest, an August 21 voyage aboard the new 2,650-passenger

Koningsdam, includes visits to Iceland and Scotland. Rates for seven-night sailings start at \$999, and rates for the August 21 trip start at \$3,199; hollandamerica.com.

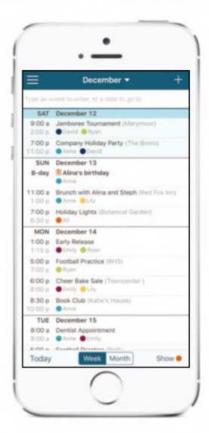
SCANDINAVIA: Viking Ocean Cruises debuted last year with a

single 930-passenger ship that sold out immediately; this year the company launches two additional ocean vessels for itineraries, including the 14-night Viking Homelands trip from Stockholm, with stops in Gdańsk, Helsinki, and Copenhagen, as well as an overnight stay in St. Petersburg. Rates start at \$5,099 and include 11 guided tours; vikingcruises.com.

INSIDER CRUISING TIP Most cruise companies list preferred agents online. They are trained to help you find the best cabins, pricing, and amenities.

THE RHINE: Many cruises simply sail past this historic river's grand castles. On Tauck's 12-night voyage from Amsterdam to Basel aboard its spacious new 130-passenger vessel, guests visit inside several and even dine in one. Excursions include tours of medieval towns and the Black Forest spa town of Baden Baden. Rates start at \$4,890; tauck.com. ➤





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MIDDLE EAST: Souks, the Suez Canal, ancient Petra, the holy sites of Jerusalem, and the Acropolis—all are on Azamara Club Cruises' 16-night sailing (beginning May 1) from Dubai to Athens, with calls in Israel and Oman, Jordan, on the recently updated 686-passenger *Azamara Quest*. Rates start at \$2,979; azamara clubcruises.com.

VIETNAM: This hot destination is the focus of Celebrity's 14-night Singapore to Hong Kong voyage aboard the 2,138-passenger *Celebrity Millennium*. The February 14 itinerary offers excursions to Hanoi, the imperial city of Hue, and Ho Chi Minh City (old Saigon). Rates start at \$1,249; celebritycruises.com.

THAILAND & MALAYSIA: Star Clipper's new seven-night Far East itineraries (beginning December 2, 2016) combine the spectacular scenery of Phuket and the Malaysian peninsula with the vintage experience of tall-ship sailing on an elegant 170-passenger ship. Rates start at \$1,320; starclippers.com.

SRI LANKA & THE MALDIVES: Silversea's surprisingly luxurious 120-passenger *Silver Discoverer* departs December 2, 2016 for a 15-day voyage from the Thai beaches of Phuket to Myanmar (for visits to the 1,000-year-old temples of Baga), then on to former British outposts in the Andamans, Sri Lanka's elephant-rich Yala

National Park, and the idyllic Maldives. Rates start at \$10,395; silversea.com.

THE SOUTH PACIFIC: The indigenous cultures of Australia and West Papua and pristine seas of Raja Ampat and Palau are highlights of a 15-night cruise departing May 27 from Darwin, Australia, to Koror, Palau, also aboard the *Silver Discoverer*. Rates start at \$10,750; silversea.com.

FRENCH POLYNESIA: The inherent romance of sailing meets all the benefits of a high-tech yacht aboard Windstar's 148-passenger Wind Spirit. Its year-round seven- and 10-day voyages take in the dramatic seascape of French Polynesia. Rates start at \$3,199; windstarcruises.com. ➤

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INSIDER CRUISING TIP

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THE BAHAMAS: Royal Caribbean's new 4,905-passenger *Anthem of the Seas* (sister to China-based *Quantum of the Seas*) is a true shipboard adventure park—think skydiving simulator, bumper cars, and a moving observation bubble high above the deck—that sails from New Jersey's Cape Liberty to the Bahamas through

spring. Seven-, eight-, and nine-day sailing rates start at \$704; royalcaribbean.com.

CUBA: Several cruise lines are launching Cuba sailings this year with culturally focused itineraries specially designed for U.S. travelers. Luxury line Haimark's nine-night voyage from Miami on a 210-passenger vessel circumnavigates the island and stops at historic Havana,

Cienfuegos, Trinidad, Santiago de Cuba, and Holquin, plus nature reserves. Rates start at \$4,599; haimarkline.com.

CENTRAL & SOUTH AMERICA: Crystal's January 22 voyage aboard the 1,070-passenger *Crystal Serenity* combines three life-list experiences in a single 20-day trip: a Panama Canal transit, a

Galápagos excursion, and three nights at Machu Picchu (included for the ship's veranda and penthouse guests). Rates start at \$6,575; crystalcruises.com.

ANTARCTICA: Lindblad Expeditions/National Geographic cele-

brates its 50th year in Antarctica with cruises aboard the 148-passenger *National Geographic Explorer*, as well as the 102-passenger *National Geographic Orion*, both equipped with videography subs relaying real-time underwater views. Naturalists and National Geographic photographers accompany every sailing. Rates for the multiple 14- and 24-day sailings start at \$12,970; expeditions.com.

ALASKA: Princess Cruises' long experience in the far northwest gives it an edge on access to areas with limited capacity, such as Glacier Bay; seven-night sails from Vancouver to Anchorage on 2,214-passenger ships showcase the Inside Passage. Rates start at \$749; princess.com. ■













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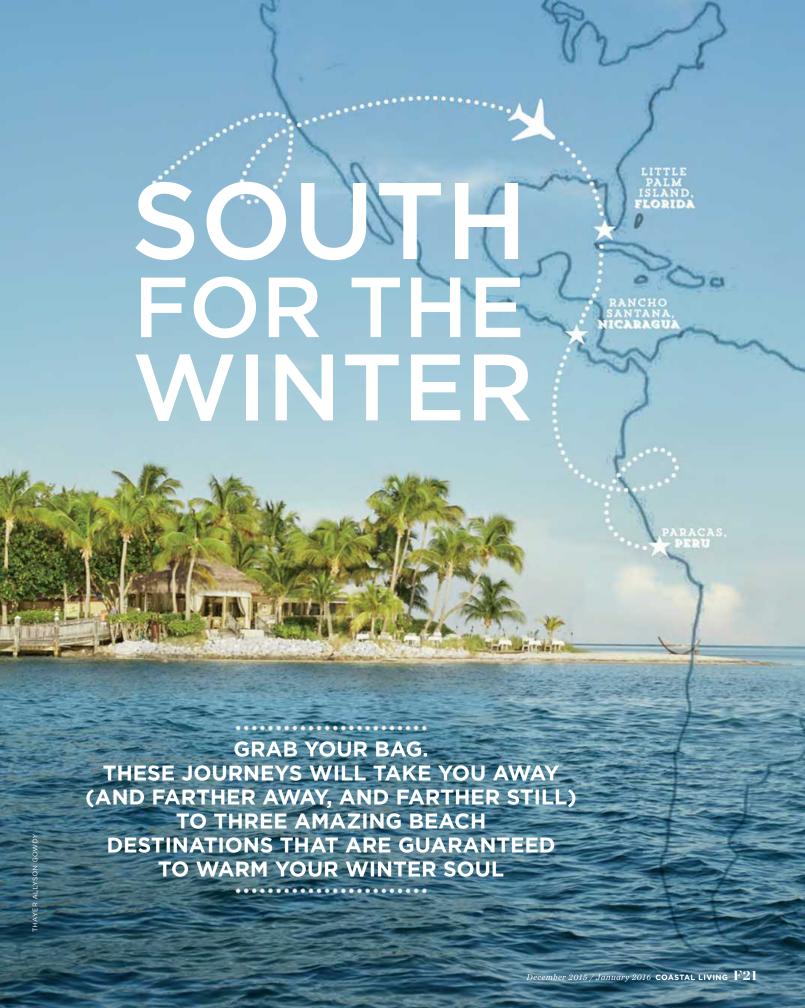
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A SHORT TRIP OFFSHORE FROM THE KEYS LEADS A MILLION MILES AWAY

WE ARE NOT EVEN on Little Palm Island yet, and already I'm feeling better. As my husband and I emerge from our car into the bright, only-in-the-Keys sunlight, a staffer exits a thatched-roof building carrying two Gumby Slumbers. His job is to put those drinks in our hands and lead us to a waiting motor launch, which will spirit us across the water to our destination. Our job is to sip, follow, and climb aboard. I take a pull of the fruity nectar-Palm Island's signature cocktail-through the straw. Maybe it's just really good rum, or that balmy breeze, but more likely it's a combination of the two that begins to smooth out the knots in my muscles and my mind.

Accessible only by boat or by seaplane, Little Palm Island Resort & Spa promises—and delivers—a level of privacy that is practically guaranteed by that limited access. A velvety sense of solitude pervades this outpost of voluntary exile with only 15 bungalows, each of which houses two suites and is topped with a manicured mop of thatch. Our suite's vaulted ceiling, deep tub, softly whirring ceiling fan, and king-size bed shrouded in white mosquito netting make for a jungleluxe haven. It's a hideaway that tempts us to venture only as far as our private porch for a dose of salt air, or to our outdoor shower for a drenching in fresh water.

Amid all of these creature comforts, though, it's what we discover is *not* here that may be the most alluring. Bungalows at Little Palm are noticeably—blissfully—devoid of televisions and radios, which leaves books, bubble baths, and conversation to fill in as our in-room entertainment. Want to watch a show? Step outside to catch the fiery sunset. Is listening to music more your speed? An overture of wind, water, and busy crickets is just an open window away.

Key deer share the sand.

And yet outdoor pleasures still beckon. We while away three days in loose-limbed recreation: exploring the shallows on standup paddleboards, indulging in a couple's massage, dining by torchlight with our feet in the sand, and watching lanky-legged seabirds pace the beach. And although we see other couples coming and going from dinner, the pool, and the spa, we enjoy a tacit, shared credo of allowing each other to pass unperturbed.

That privacy, that intimacy, and that simplicity work their magic in surprisingly short time; the daily stresses we kicked to the curb on our arrival have left behind no trace. With happy hearts and clear minds, we spend our last afternoon snoozing and reading by the lagoon-style pool. I snap a picture of the palm trees overhead with my smartphone, which feels foreign and heavy in my hand, and then stop just short of sharing it online. I toss the blinking, buzzing phone, a reminder of the reality that awaits us tomorrow, back into my bag. I replace it with one last frosty Gumby Slumber and, along with it, drink in every moment that remains of life on this idyllic island escape.

—Lindsay Lambert Day

Little Palm's motor launch making the 10-minutes-toparadise run









.. THE DETAILS.....

GET HERE

Key West is the nearest airport; for a totally seamless trip, book a round-trip airport transfer (\$250)—a Little Palm Island representative will pick you up in Key West and make the 35-minute drive to the resort's Welcome Station on Little Torch Key, where you'll catch the shuttle boat to the island.

STAY HERE

For a true VIP vibe, book an Island Romance Suite. In addition to the standard outdoor shower and private veranda, you'll have your own outdoor fire pit, hot tub, and daybed. Rates start at \$1,190 and are exclusive of spa services, meals, and beverages. An additional resort fee covers amenities, from welcome cocktail to staff gratuities. A minimum two-night stay is required on weekends.



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10 percent discount off the published rate,
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at littlepalmisland.com.



·····THE DETAILS ······

GET HERE

Rancho Santana is a two-hour drive from the Managua airport. Pickup by the hotel is recommended, as many roads are unpaved.

STAY HERE

The ranch's 17-room inn features private terraces and cozy furnishings made at the property's millworks. Rates start at \$275; 310/929-5221. The 25 beach-

view villas are available for families and groups.

FAT HERE

La Finca y El Mar serves farm-to-table breakfast, lunch, and dinner in its oceanfront dining room and patio. The Beach & Surf Club at Playa los Perros is famous for mouthwatering tacos and cold Nicaraguan beer. The café at the inn serves coffee, smoothies, and

panini. In-home chef services by La Finca y El Mar are available for villa stays.

PLAY HERE

Rancho Santana offers yoga, surfing lessons, guided surf expeditions to neighboring breaks, stand-up paddleboarding, horseback riding, nature walks, bocce, horseshoes, two pools, and a spa where you can unwind from it all.



SPECIAL READER DISCOUNT! Book three nights in a Pied-A-Terre Suite and receive two extra nights at no cost. Stay includes private transport, arrival treats on your terrace, and tours of the inn and art gallery for \$1,300. Offer valid February 1-May 31, and is subject to availability. E-mail jacqueline@ ranchosantana.com to make a reservation.

RANCHO SANTANA, NICARAGUA

EMBRACING YOGA AND SURFING COMES NATURALLY AT THIS PACIFIC COAST PLAYGROUND

"SHINE YOUR HEART to the ocean," says my yoga instructor, as our class moves into upward dog. I stretch the crown of my head up and open my eyes. Before me is a panorama as invigorating as the yoga we are all practicing: A surfer drops into Playa Rosada's famous left break, a plumeria tree is decked out in pinwheel-shaped white blooms, and surrounding palm trees sway, creating a swish that harmonizes sweetly with the rumble of the Pacific.

As we exhale into downward dog, my view turns to my teal yoga mat. It's lightly dusted with pink sand, a souvenir from my short walk across the beach to the yoga patio. It's a second, albeit slightly abstract, landscape, and it's the perfect companion to my Pacific vista. Both views bring me surf, sand, and Zen.

Which tells me that I've picked the perfect spot to do two things (three, if you count escaping the cold): reclaim my love of yoga and deepen my crush on surfing. I'm on Nicaragua's southern Pacific coast at Rancho Santana, a 2,700-acre property with five beaches, an inn, oceanfront villas, and a renowned restaurant, in an effort to make a New Year's—worthy attempt at reigniting those twinned passions.

I became enamored with yoga 10 years ago because of its transformative effect, but recently I've struggled to make time for my mat. Then, two years ago, I took surf lessons and fell hard for the sport's physicality, innate immersion in nature, and intoxicating reward of gliding to shore. Every time I've come near the beach since, I've longed to be back out there, on a board.

One step at a time, however: What better way to get back to surfing than to park myself on the inn's beachfront patio; fortify with a panino filled with farm-fresh greens and a smoothie blended from coconut, watermelon, and banana; and watch a pack of surfers working the 6-foot waves

of Playa Santana's sun-drenched water? And while 6 feet looks just fine on my husband, when it's made of water, it looks pretty intimidating. I sip my smoothie, grateful that my first time back on the board will be on the gentlest of Rancho Santana's five beaches: Playa los Perros.

If beaches had symbols like those given to ski runs, Los Perros would get a sweet, green dot for its warm, newbie-friendly surf that peaks at around 4 feet. After a quick overview on dry land with my brighteyed instructor, I propel out to the waves. At his signal, I paddle hard toward shore and ungracefully clamber into my surfer crouch, my wobbly beginning sending me quickly right off the board—a friendly baptism, but a dunk nonetheless. After several more attempts, I find my sweet spot and cruise all the way to the beach. It's a floating feeling that I immediately recall and want more of, with a pretty view of the wide, sleepy beach to boot.

The mounting joys of my getaway are amplified by the gorgeous place I get to call home. My first two nights are spent at the Inn at Rancho Santana, with its dark wood and wicker decor, ocean views, and butterfly-rich gardens filled with manicured hedges of white and purple bougain-villea and mounds of bright pink lantana. I spend another two in Villa Escondida, a stunning four-bedroom home perched high above Playa Escondido.

My last afternoon I spend completely alone on that beach, napping on the lattecolored sand and floating in the powerful push and pull of the shore break. The waves never crash on me—they simply heave toward the sand, carrying me swiftly to shore and then sending me back out again. I giddily surrender to being adrift as my passions come together in one glorious place—a little surf, a little Zen, for a whole new year. —Susan Hall Mahon

PARACAS, PERU

A LITTLE-KNOWN STRETCH OF SOUTH AMERICAN SHORE REVEALS LIFE AND LANDSCAPE BOTH CURIOUS AND WILD

I BARELY NOTICE the desert sands at first. Then, two hours into my taxi ride down the Pan American Highway from Lima toward Peru's southern coast, I spot flashes of green among the dunes. Crops grow in the Peruvian desert? My driver explains that visiting Israelis shared their knowledge of desert irrigation, transforming the land-scape. Soon we're pointing at rows of vegetation: "Grapes! Tangerines! Asparagus!"

Signs for Paracas appear by the roadside, gulls squawk overhead, a ray of sunshine breaks through the white mist, and the shoreline bursts into view. I realize we've been beside the water the entire drive—the first in a string of wondrous discoveries.

Despite spending years living the gypsy expat lifestyle in South America, I'd never wandered near this stretch of Peruvian coast. Now I'm here to explore. The tiny fishing town of Paracas, located beside a national reserve, is near the Ballestas Islands and their abundant marine life—fish, dolphins, turtles, sea lions, and dozens of species of birds—yet it has remained in the shadow of nearby Ecuador's world-famous Galápagos Islands.

I have two expeditions in mind: out to the islands, and into the sand dunes of the national reserve. Even as I check in to my suite at the luxurious Hotel Paracas, nature announces itself: Pelicans perchidly on the roof. Walking past palm trees and down the hotel's whitewashed boardwalk, I have to dip my head to dodge a sudden cloud of swooping terns on my way to board a waiting yacht. Just 20 minutes later, after racing through aquamarine waters, we reach the Ballestas Islands-a collection of jagged red rocks, eroded by the elements over centuries into gaping caves and craggy archways with glimpses of the sky beyond. They shoot upward from the turbulent, white-tipped waves and appear to me, as we approach by boat, to be writhing—as if they have a life of their own.

A closer look reveals why. Flocks of cormorants, blue-footed boobies, pelicans, and waddling Humboldt penguins nest in the crags, plummet below the waves, and hover in the air. An avian stream pours over the edge of a cliff and heads toward our boat, skimming the water's surface to dip and douse feathers. The soft sound of a thousand pairs of flapping wings envelops us.

From those Darwinesque island landscapes to dunes more reminiscent of *Lawrence*

of Arabia, I venture into the vast emptiness of Paracas National Reserve in an SUV with a guide and my fellow guests. We drive into these 300,000 protected hectares of coastal desert, which feels like a no man's land until I step out into the dry air and look down to the hardened sand beneath my feet. It is studded with fossils from 46 million years ago: sea snail shells, chunks of wood, calcified shark's teeth, and the bones of giant penguins—reminders of an ancient ocean floor.

We walk to the edge of a cliff to spy the terra-cotta-colored sand below, raked by an angry, green-tinged tide. We snap photos while the wind howls in our ears, whips our hair, and billows into our clothes. The energy here is so raw and primal that only the red-necked vultures hovering above the shoreline appear to be in their element.

Later, in the calm of my balcony, I listen to birds chatter in the treetops and watch the sky become transformed by watercolor streaks of pink and orange. I can feel, even in this serenity, the swirling natural world that informs this moment. Here—in this surreal place—where the desert meets the sea, where the wild allows for the civilized.

What a discovery. What a lucky adventurer I am. $-Flora\ Baker$



SPECIAL READER DISCOUNT!

Enjoy two nights of luxury accommodations, three meals, late checkout, and complimentary Thermal Circuit treatment at the spa, plus other benefits at the luxury resort, with 10 percent discount off the published rate. Mention promo code "COASTAL LIVING 2016" when making your reservation.









Dunes for days in Paracas National Reserve

..... THE DETAILS

GET HERE

First, get to Lima: LAN Airlines offers direct flights from Miami, Orlando, Los Angeles, and New York; lan.com. JetBlue offers direct service from Fort Lauderdale; jetblue.com. The three-hour scenic drive to Paracas can be made via bus (cruzdelsur.com.pe) or shuttle, which can be booked for guests by Hotel Paracas.

With two swimming pools and a spa, the 120-room Hotel Paracas is a perfect luxury basecamp. In addition to guided journeys to the Ballestas Islands and into Paracas National Reserve, the resort's list of adventures includes sandboarding to a tented dinner in the middle of the dunes, and sightseeing flights above the famous Nazca Lines. Rates start at \$180; libertador.com.pe.